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## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Executive Directors, DSN Boards  
Chief Executive Officers, Qualified Service Coordination, and Early Intervention Providers

**FROM:** Beverly A. H. Buscemi, Ph.D. *Beverly A. H. Buscemi, Ph.D.*  
State Director

**RE:** State Funded Family Support Stipends and Respite Services

**DATE:** May 25, 2011

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In response to the drastic state funding reductions sustained by DDSN in the past several years, resources allocated to state funded family support stipends and respite services has been reduced from \$4.1 million to \$1.5 million. This significant reduction was not an indication that this service is not considered crucial. Instead, it was due to the fact that this program does not capture any federal Medicaid funding, so unlike most of the other services supported by DDSN, any state funding reductions of this program were not magnified by the loss of Medicaid revenue.

A recent review of projected FY10/11 DSN Board expenditures of the state funded family support stipends and respite services indicates that, despite the easing of the utilization criteria, a large amount of these funds will go unspent. After discussions with you and various advocates, I felt that additional changes needed to be made to facilitate the utilization of these resources to support families, many of whom receive no other public support.

At the May 19, 2011 meeting of the DDSN Commission, an extension of the period in which the FY10/11 state funded family support stipend and respite services could be provided was approved. DDSN will now allow these funds to be spent through August 31, 2011. The DDSN Boards will soon be receiving a contract amendment to reflect this change and instructions on how to account for the funds. These funds must **NOT** be used for residential and at-home waivers consumers.

During this extended expenditure period, I would encourage you to not only look to those people on waiting lists for services, e.g., those on level II service coordination, but also to look at utilizing these funds to offer summer services to children and adults. Summer services would be considered respite services and therefore not subject to the financial means test. Summer services may include inclusive activities such as arts and crafts, music classes, activities offered by libraries, zoos, and

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museums, day or overnight camps selected by the person and participation on sports teams. Such utilization would also assist you in restoring some of the substantial reductions issued under the federal IDEA funding.

Please remember that these funds are available to all consumers who meet the criteria, as specified in 734-01-DD, not just for those served by the DSN Board. All private service coordination and early intervention providers' requests must be treated in the same manner as those made within the DSN Board.

If you have any questions about the extension in expenditure of the state funded family support stipends or respite services, please contact Mr. Tom Waring at (803) 898-9792 or [twaring@ddsn.sc.gov](mailto:twaring@ddsn.sc.gov).